



Summer Village of Grandview

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October 13, 2015

Pigeon Lake Renewal Steering Group
Box 11, Site 3, RR2
Westerose, AB
T0C 2V0

Via Email: pigeonlakerenewal@gmail.com

Dear Sirs,

Re: Pigeon Lake Renewal

The Council of the Summer Village of Grandview, after considering your letter of September 21, 2015, and reviewing your website (www.pigeonlakerenewal.weebly.com) and your news release of September 28, 2015, offers the following comments:

Some of the statements that your group has made suggest that you are not fully aware of what is going on at Pigeon Lake. The phrase “Pigeon Lake Toxicity” in the title of your news release and the terms “toxic, unhygienic, and dangerous” within that document are inaccurate and misleading. It is true that these naturally occurring cyanobacteria can produce toxins, but only in rare instances has a test result for toxins at Pigeon Lake exceeded the recreational guideline. There is no doubt that the climatic conditions we have seen this year have exasperated the algae problem with low water levels and high water temperatures, but Pigeon Lake is neither toxic nor dangerous. If it were so, the health warning issued by Alberta Health would have been at a level much higher than just an advisory.

Your news release and other messages also imply that no action is being taken in addressing water quality issues when, in fact, many residents, groups, and government bodies have been working tirelessly for many years to improve watershed practices and to investigate and take action on what can be done to improve water quality and preserve the health of the lake. These include ten Summer Villages and two counties at Pigeon Lake, each taking action within their boundaries; the Alliance of Pigeon Lake Municipalities; the Pigeon Lake Watershed Association (sponsors of the Pigeon Lake Watershed Management Plan); Alberta Environment and Parks; Alberta Municipal Affairs; Alberta Transportation; Alberta Lake Management Society; Central Alberta Recreational Lakes; the Association of Summer Villages of Alberta; the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association; the Northeast Pigeon Lake Regional Wastewater Commission; the University of Alberta; and the South Pigeon Lake Regional Wastewater Planning Committee. These groups are working in harmony in either leading or supporting work being done to protect Pigeon Lake.

In addition, the communities at Pigeon Lake have received a significant level of support from the provincial government, not only in funding for the south-side wastewater system but also

Grandview – committed to watershed stewardship

in technical and financial support for scientific studies of the lake. Without the support of the provincial government, the parties working hard on this problem would not have been able to make the significant advancements they have achieved to date. Suggestions that nothing has been done are neither accurate nor helpful.

The list of 28 action items that you have proposed is nothing more than an inventory of projects that have been previously proposed and evaluated by some of the groups listed above. Most have been discounted because of the negative impact on the lake's ecosystem or because of the prohibitively high costs involved. Proposing ideas that have already been determined to be unfeasible does not move matters forward.

The impact from human development and natural processes that have occurred in Pigeon Lake over many years is not something that can be reversed overnight with a magic pill, and because an ecosystem consists of many interdependent processes, measures must be taken with great care to avoid unintended consequences.

Your enthusiasm for protecting our lake is appreciated, but rather than tarnishing the reputation of Pigeon Lake and instilling false hope in its residents, we respectfully suggest that you could make better use of your time and energy by learning about and supporting the activities already being undertaken. Our best hope for success in restoring and preserving the health of our lake lies in a coordinated and unified approach by all interested parties.

I would be pleased to discuss this matter further with your group if required.

Yours truly,

Don Davidson, Mayor

cc. Hon. Shannon Phillips, Minister of Environment and Parks (copy by mail)
Mayor Don Fleming, Summer Village of Ma Me O
Mayor Brian Keeler, Summer Village of Norris Beach
Mayor Kevin Pratt, Summer Village of Crystal Springs
Mayor Debra McDaniel, Summer Village of Poplar Bay
Mayor Peter Pellett, Summer Village of Sundance
Mayor Ralph Johnson, Summer Village of Itaska
Mayor Donald Oborowsky, Summer Village of Argentia
Mayor Allan Watt, Summer Village of Silver Beach
Mayor Karen Belmont, Summer Village of Golden Days
Mayor John Whaley, County of Leduc
Reeve Kathy Rooyakkers, County of Wetaskiwin
APLM, Brian Waterhouse
PLWA, Susan Ellis